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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, Washington 98101-3140

MAR 27 2008

Reply to
Attn Of: ECL-115

Bruce Oshita, Chief, Restoration Program
366 CEA/CEVA
1100 Liberator Street, Bldg. 1297
Mountain Home AFB Idaho 83648-5292

Re: Asbestos Releases at Mountain Home Air Force Base

Dear Mr. Oshita:

I am writing about broken asbestos piping that was found in the fall of 2007 in connection with the Mountain Home Air Force Base housing demolition/reconstruction project. EPA understands that the matter is being investigated by Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), with EPA Region 10 technical support. I want to make you aware of the expectations of the EPA Region 10 Office of Environmental Cleanup (ECL) with regard to this matter.

I believe the Air Force is aware that asbestos in soils around the housing and in debris piles at Verlinde Hills may pose a health risk to current and future base residents and to base workers. We expect that, in addition to taking measures to avoid continued releases, the Air Force is planning to define the extent of asbestos contamination and quantitatively assess the risk it poses. EPA is currently developing risk assessment protocols for asbestos as part of a framework for investigating asbestos-contaminated sites that includes a tiered approach for sampling. The approach includes evaluating historical data, sampling soils, and performing activity-based sampling to determine asbestos levels in air. If risks are determined to be unacceptable, remedies could include a combination of actions, such as education, consolidation and containment, containment in place, institutional controls, and removal.

I understand that DEQ and EPA's Office of Environmental Assessment are investigating matters surrounding the management of the asbestos-containing pipe material. If in addressing asbestos regulatory compliance issues the Air Force achieves an appropriate response to the risks posed by asbestos in soils, further CERCLA work under the Federal Facility Agreement will not be necessary. However, to ensure that this is so, it is essential that the Air Force include ECL in communications and in the planning and execution of any assessment and response activity.

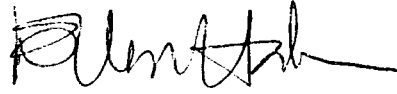
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Please call me as soon as possible to discuss this issue. I can be reached at (206) 553-1215.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ellen Hale", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ellen Hale
Remedial Project Manager

Dean Nygard, DEQ
Lori Cora, Region 10 EPA ORC
Michele Wright, Region 10 EPA, Office of Air, Waste, and Toxics